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Social Issues and Challenges faced by Muslim Women: Impediments for Viksit Bharat @2047

Kamala Kanta Ojha[1], Prasanta Sahoo[2]

[1]Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Social Science, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore, Odisha, India
[2]Lecturer and Head, Department of Political Science, Kendrapara Autonomous College, Kendrapara, Odisha, India

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ABSTRACT

Today with her vast and diverse population, Bharat stands as the most populous country in the world, showcasing the incredible potential and richness of human resources. Although Bharat currently a developing nation, she aspires to become a developed state. Many intellectuals believe that Bharat can emerge as the 'Vishwa Guru' in various aspects. Therefore, it is important to differentiate between merely "development" and "sustainable development," as well as between "growth" and "inclusive growth." In the current context, social issues and challenges significantly hinder the growth and development of Muslim women in Islamic societies and pose obstacles to achieving Viksit Bharat @ 2047. The present paper aims to examine and highlight the social issues and challenges faced by Muslim women, particularly in relation to their socio-economic status, employment, educational attainment, rights, and privileges. It also discusses how social restrictions impede progress towards Viksit Bharat-2047. The study finds that increased awareness and the implementation of new government policies aimed at protecting the rights, liberties, and dignity of Muslim women can lead to meaningful development.Thus, it will contribute to successfully realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047. Further, the study concludes with some suggestions for the betterment of Muslim women .

Keywords: Social Issues and Challenges, Muslim Women, Viksit Bharat @2047

INTRODUCTION

"Genuine development must be sustainable and inclusive; not all growth is real. However, the current conditions of Muslims regarding education, economy, sanitation, health, social status, and gender justice challenge the definition of inclusive growth. It is believed that Muslim Personal Law significantly contributes to these conditions, with issues such as the purdah custom, social separation, religious ties, and a conservative environment negatively impacting the status of Muslim women.

The Muslim Women Act of 2019 has been enacted to improve the circumstances for Muslim women. This study will examine the fundamental concepts and implementation of the Muslim Women Act 2019, focusing on gender justice, using Bhadrak district as the area of research."

Concept of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 :
In simple terms, 'Viksit Bharat' means 'Developed India.' Although India is currently a developing nation, the structure, strength, and status of the country have undergone systematic changes in the 21st century. India is on a determined path to secure its status as a developed nation by 2047, aligning with the milestone of its 100th anniversary of independence. This vision not only embodies national ambition but also reinforces our commitment to progress and prosperity for all citizens.

The vision of Viksit Bharat focuses on transforming India into a fully developed nation by 2047, and it is based on four key pillars: Youth (Yuva), the Poor (Garib), Women (Mahila), and Farmers (Annadata).

Additionally, the Union Budget of India for the 2025-26 session introduces innovative measures aimed at making India a prosperous and self-reliant nation by its centenary of independence in 2047.

Objectives of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 :
The main objectives of Viksit Bharat 2047 are discussed below:

1. Zero poverty
The primary objective of Viksit Bharat is to achieve zero poverty in the country. While India is on the path to becoming a developed nation, it has yet to establish itself as a zero-poverty state. Therefore, a crucial goal of Viksit Bharat is to eradicate poverty throughout India. In this regard, India has implemented food security schemes that continue to benefit over 80 crore people. Additionally, the Jan Dhan Yojana is an important initiative aimed at empowering millions by providing access to banking services, thereby ensuring financial inclusion for the common people.

2.Farmer Welfare
Agriculture is the backbone of our society, and farmers are the true producers of food in our state. Without proper development for farmers, the vision of a Viksit Bharat (Developed India) by 2047 cannot be realized. Therefore, the Government of India has implemented several schemes, such as PM KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, and the Soil Health Card, to ensure financial security for both farmers and the agricultural sector. Emphasizing farmer welfare is a crucial objective in achieving the goals of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

3.Education
Education is like a mirror reflecting society. Without education, a person's life can seem meaningless. Education illuminates a person's journey. From this perspective, the Indian government places significant importance on the education sector. The Government of India is making significant strides in educational development with the implementation of the New Education Policy 2020. Under the visionary leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the dedicated guidance of Honorable Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan, this policy aims to transform the educational landscape and empower future generations. In this context, approximately ₹630 crores have been disbursed as the first installment for the selected PM SHRI Schools, and 12 institutions have been designated as Institutions of Eminence. The Government of India also emphasizes the Skill India Mission and the PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, which have upskilled millions of individuals. Thus, focusing on education is a key objective of Viksit Bharat 2047.

4.Women Empowermen
In our society, both men and women are equal in the eyes of the law. The development of women is essential for the proper development of men.Behind every successful man, there’s often a woman—whether she’s a nurturing mother, a supportive sister, or a loving wife, her influence is undeniable. In reality, men and women are like two branches of the same tree. Therefore, women empowerment is a major issue for any state. In this context, the government of India promotes the participation of women in all sectors of society. For example, The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam guarantees quotas for Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) women, promoting women's leadership. Additionally, the criminalization of triple talaq and the implementation of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, have increased the rights and security of Muslim women.The government of India has also initiated various schemes, such as the Jal Jeevan Mission, PM Ujjwala Yojana, and Swachh Bharat Mission, along with increased maternity benefits under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY). These efforts contribute to fostering a culture of inclusivity and empowerment for women in India.

5.Economic development
It is a major objective for every state. Each sovereign nation aims to strengthen its economic capabilities, as economic strength directly influences a state's status. In India, the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has unified the market, while digital initiatives like Aadhaar-Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and Unified Payments Interface (UPI) have transformed payment systems. The Government of India has also introduced various policy initiatives, such as PM Mudra Yojana, Startup India, and PM Jan Dhan Yojana, which have contributed to reforms in the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector, broadened financial inclusion, and created employment opportunities. Additionally, the government e-market has enhanced the efficiency of the economy. Thus, economic development is one of the primary objectives of the Viksit Bharat 2047 initiative.

6. Science & Technology
The importance of science and technology is one of the major objectives of the state of India. India places significant emphasis on technology and has achieved considerable success in this area. For instance, the recent success of Chandrayaan-3 is a testament to India's capabilities in space exploration, as it became the first country to reach the South Pole of the Moon. Therefore, focusing on technology is a key objective of Viksit Bharat 2047.

7. Infrastructure
The development of infrastructure in India has seen significant progress through initiatives such as PM Gati Shakti, which enhance the transportation of goods and services, generate employment, and improve the quality of life for citizens. India has expanded its road, railway, air, and waterway networks, achieving notable success. The UDAN scheme also underscores India's growing infrastructure capacity. Thus, prioritizing infrastructure is a fundamental goal of Viksit Bharat 2047.

8. National Security
Protecting both the internal and external territories of a nation is one of the major responsibilities of a state. The government of India places great importance on its national security. For example, the amendment of Articles 370 and 35A, various surgical strikes against terrorism, and Operation Sindoor are all significant actions that demonstrate the state's commitment to national security. Therefore, focusing on national security is one of the key aims and objectives of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Social Issues & Challenges faced by Muslim Women:
Following are the social issues and challenges that Muslim women face .

1. Role of Patriarchy
In reality, a patriarchal structure holds significant power in Muslim society.In numerous families, it is common for the male member to assume the role of head, taking charge of important household decisions. This dynamic can provide clarity and direction, ensuring that the family's needs are met efficiently. Consequently, Muslim women often play a minor role in family leadership and are typically viewed as guardians in a limited capacity. This patriarchal system represents a fundamental social issue faced by Muslim women within their communities.

2. Conservative Society
Conservative societal norms present significant challenges for Muslim women, particularly within the Muslim community. These conservative attitudes not only hinder the advancement and empowerment of Muslim women and girls but also obstruct the realization of the vision for Viksit Bharat-2047. Thus, the conservative nature of society poses a fundamental problem for Muslim women in their communities.

3. Gender discrimination
Gender discrimination is a significant issue that Muslim women face in their societies. Many Muslim women feel that their primary roles are to care for their families and bear children. If a husband is dissatisfied with any aspect of his wife's duties, he may resort to practices like triple talaq to initiate a divorce. From this viewpoint, gender discrimination poses a major challenge for Muslim women in their communities.

4. Poverty
Poverty is a major problem not only for Muslim women but for Indian society as a whole. In reality, Muslim women often face economic difficulties due to their dependency on male members of their families. While a few women may have some source of income, most rely on their family for financial support. Thus, poverty remains a significant issue for Muslim women within their communities.

5. Illiteracy
Education reflects the state of our society. Due to a lack of awareness among some Muslim communities, many Muslim girls drop out after only a few years of schooling. To understand the educational challenges faced by these girls, we need to examine the underlying reasons for their high dropout rates. Illiteracy is a significant issue that Muslim women face in their communities.

In our discussions about the various issues and challenges faced by Muslim women, we recognized an important question: How can Muslim women become empowered in order to help fulfill the mission and vision of Viksit Bharat 2047? With this in mind, we propose several suggestions aimed at reducing the social issues and challenges faced by Muslim women and creating a clear path toward achieving the goals of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

Suggestions:
Although Muslim women face many challenges in our society, we can address these issues by adopting the following suggestions:

1. Promote awareness among Muslim communities, involving both men and women.
2. Enhance educational opportunities for women in society.
3. Reduce the dominance of patriarchal norms.
4. Emphasize gender equity to combat gender discrimination.
5. Eradicate blind beliefs and reduce conservative attitudes within the community.
6. Ensure proper implementation of the Muslim Women Act of 2019 (Triple Talaq).
7. Support government initiatives aimed at improving women's empowerment.
8. Create special employment opportunities for Muslim women through government programs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the researcher concludes that although Muslim women face various social issues and challenges within their own communities, increased awareness among Muslim people and the implementation of new government policies aimed at protecting the rights, liberties, and dignity of Muslim women can lead to meaningful development.Thus, it will contribute to successfully realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat-2047.

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